

# NEVADA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

## Amended Minutes of Special Meeting

February 14, 2007

A meeting of the Nevada County Transportation Commission (NCTC) was held on Wednesday, February 14, 2007, in the City of Grass Valley Council Chambers, 125 East Main Street, Grass Valley, California. The meeting was scheduled for 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Nate Beason, Sally Harris, Chauncey Poston, John Spencer, Russ Steele

Members Absent: Tim Brady, Josh Susman

Staff Present: Dan Landon, Executive Director; Nancy Holman, Administrative Services Officer

Standing Orders: Chairman Beason convened the Nevada County Transportation Commission meeting at 8:30 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance.

### ACTION ITEM:

1. Proposed Modifications to the Dorsey Drive Interchange Project: See attached report. Presentations will be given by Winder Bajwa, Caltrans District 3 Project Manager; Tim Kiser, Grass Valley City Engineer; Dan Landon, Nevada County Transportation Commission Executive Director

Chairman Beason requested the record show that Commissioner Susman had an excused absence and Commissioner Brady had excused himself due to a potential conflict of interest.

The following is a synopsis of the presentation given to the Commissioners that had been previously presented to the Grass Valley City Council. The presentation explained the concerns or comments the City had submitted to Caltrans last fall regarding the Dorsey Drive Interchange Project and Caltrans response to those concerns. (Note: a copy of the PowerPoint shown is available at the Commission's office).

Winder Bajwa reviewed the original need and purpose of the Dorsey Drive Project and its original components:

#### Project Need and Purpose:

- To relieve operational problems at the existing interchanges at Idaho-Maryland Road and Brunswick Road.
- To provide a more direct access to specific high use sites (Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital and Sierra College Nevada County Campus).

#### Original Major Components:

- Widen Dorsey Drive
- Realign Joerschke Drive
- Construct a new Dorsey Drive overcrossing structure
- Add highway auxiliary lanes from Idaho-Maryland Road to Brunswick Road on and off-ramps.

Tim Kiser stated that the City of Grass Valley wanted to ensure that the Dorsey Drive project was financially viable, consistent with Grass Valley's character, and accommodated traffic demands.

Therefore, on July 11<sup>th</sup> and July 25<sup>th</sup> of 2006, City Council reviewed the project and sent the following recommendations to Caltrans:

- Steepen cut slopes to 1.5 ft. horizontal to 1 ft. vertical
- Realign the westbound SR 20/49 off-ramp with Joerschke Drive
- Reduce Dorsey Drive roadway width.
- Minimize profile changes to the Dorsey Drive overcrossing structure.

On September 22, 2006, the City met with NCTC and Caltrans staff to discuss the recommendations. Caltrans agreed to use steeper cut slopes and reduce the width of the Dorsey Drive roadway. Caltrans then prepared a detailed analysis of the proposal to merge Joerschke Drive with the westbound freeway off-ramp, and the pros and cons of maintaining the existing profile of the Dorsey Drive overcrossing structure.

Dan Landon discussed the programmed funding for the project, after which a Commission discussion ensued.

Commissioner Spencer complimented Tim Kiser and City Council in their efforts with the redesign of the project to save money, and for doing a good job with what they had to work with.

Winder Bajwa reviewed the project schedule. Right-of-way acquisition is to begin in the fall of 2007 and is to be completed in January 2009. Construction is scheduled to begin June 2009. However, currently there is a funding shortfall of \$14 million plus. Commissioner Spencer stated that the schedule needed to be highlighted in some way to note to the public that there is no funding for construction at this time.

The Commission discussed funding options that may be available for completing the project. Dan Landon noted that currently there are only two funding sources for the project: 1) the Regional Transportation Mitigation Fee, which provides a small component of the total project and 2) the State Transportation Improvement Program funds which have been very unreliable for the last four years. If the cost of the project goes up each year at 5%, with just to \$2-4 million received each year from the STIP, there is a significant need for an infusion of funds to keep the project going.

Dan Landon stated that Resolution 07-04 had two action items the Grass Valley City Council recommended to Caltrans: 1) Proceed with design and right-of-way for the Dorsey Drive Interchange project without realigning Joerschke Drive, by merging Joerschke Drive with the westbound off-ramp from SR 20/49; and 2) Widen the existing Dorsey Drive overcrossing structure to accommodate five travel lanes and five foot wide shoulders in lieu of a new bridge.

Commissioner Spencer made a motion to accept Resolution 07-04. Commissioner Steele seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Commissioner Steele stated the "Urban Transportation Monitor" had an article about the Commission's efforts to promote telecommuting as a traffic congestion reduction and air quality improvement initiative. He said it was nice to know the Commission was getting a little national recognition for its efforts. Commissioner Steele said he would like to have a future agenda item scheduled to discuss the economic analysis of widening Highway 49 and what it would mean to the community.

Chairman Beason stated that at the January NCTC meeting, the Commission recognized the need to come up with a strategy to get money from the state and federal level. He noted that the first step in

that direction was when Dan Landon and he met with Jody Jones of Caltrans and talked about projects that would be funded from STIP funds: the SR 89 "Mousehole", the Dorsey Drive Interchange, and the SR 49 widening project at La Barr Meadows Road. At the NCTC March meeting, decisions will need to be made on prioritizing these projects and how to best use the STIP funds. Ms. Jones talked about the possibility of getting matching money for the La Barr Meadows project. Also in the discussion with Ms. Jones, emphasis was given that the La Barr Meadows SR 49 Corridor Mobility Improvement Account request be put back on the agenda, it had been on the project list for CMIA funding, and then Caltrans Headquarters took it off the list. Chairman Beason stated he had asked someone prominent in the transportation arena to make some contacts at the state level to see if the project can be pushed forward. The CTC was trying to focus the money on relieving congestion.

Executive Director Landon stated that a year ago the Governor came out with the "Strategic Growth Plan" and one of the principles in it was the proposal to relieve total congestion in the state by 10% within a certain number of years. It appears, based on the projects that are seen on the proposed list for the CMIA funding, that the CTC staff is focusing on those projects that will help obtain that percentage so the administration will be able to say it has achieved the reduction of congestion that had been proposed. Connectivity projects, which the SR 49 La Barr Meadows project is considered, do not help achieve the goal very quickly and they are not as likely to be approved.

Chairman Beason stated he signed a letter approved by the Commission requesting that the project be reconsidered and also he signed a letter to Senator Aanestad and Assemblyman Keene requesting the same. He called both of their offices to reemphasize that the Nevada County Transportation Commission needed their shepherding of the project at the state level. He will call them again before the meeting occurs to keep the pressure on. Chairman Beason stated that he asked Dan Landon to prepare a letter for him to sign thanking the regional California Highway Patrol commander for the work they have done on SR 49 and asking them to continue their good work. He was going to call the commander to emphasize to him that they are appreciated and their efforts have had a measurable effect on reducing accidents.

#### SCHEULE FOR NEXT MEETING:

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 21, 2007 at 8:30 a.m., at the Nevada County Board of Supervisors Chambers.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING:

Chairman Beason adjourned the meeting at 9:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nancy D. Holman, Administrative Services Officer

Approved on: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nathan H. Beason, Chairman  
Nevada County Transportation Commission